



**A Daughter of Today
Sara Jeannette Duncan**

The Canadian author Sara Jeannette Duncan (aka Mrs. Everard Cotes) is today best known for her 1904 novel of Ontario life, "The Imperialist" (also available as a LibriVox recording), but in Duncan's own time readers were impressed more by her other works, including "A Daughter of Today," published in 1894. "A Daughter of Today" follows the story of Elfrida Bell, a young woman who escapes the American Midwest to pursue first an artistic education in Paris, and then a novice career in journalism in London. As the novel's title indicates, Elfrida is a product "of today," i.e., of her day — the 1890s. She is swept up in the heady notions of that period: Aestheticism ("art for art's sake"), fin-de-siècle Decadence, and ideas about the "New Woman" who breaks free of bourgeois conventions. With the self-absorption of youth, Elfrida sets about constructing herself along these lines. She pursues this project with bracing energy, mixed with pretension and affectation: "In nothing that she said or did, admired or condemned, was there any trace of the commonplace, except, perhaps, the desire to avoid it." Early reviewers debated whether the character of Elfrida was "fresh and original," or simply "ill-bred." This novel explores clashes between convention and originality, cultural differences (American /French /British), and rivalry between friends. - Summary by Bruce Pirie

Read by Bruce Pirie. 35 Tracks. Total Duration: 10:17:43

This recording is in the public domain and may be reproduced, distributed, or modified without permission. For more information or to volunteer, visit librivox.org.
Cover image from the book scan. Copyright expired in U.S., Canada, EU. and all countries with author's life +70 yrs laws. Cover design by TriciaG. This design is in the public domain.